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INTERNATIONAL PRELIMINARY EXAMINATION REPORT
(PCT Article 36 and Rule 70)

Applicant's or agent's file reference JD/P1706PCT	FOR FURTHER ACTION See Notification of Transmittal of International Preliminary Examination Report (Form PCT/IPEA/416)	
International application No. PCT/GB 03/00276	International filing date (day/month/year) 24.01.2003	Priority date (day/month/year) 26.01.2002
International Patent Classification (IPC) or both national classification and IPC B65D65/46		
Applicant AQUASOL LIMITED		

1. This international preliminary examination report has been prepared by this International Preliminary Examining Authority and is transmitted to the applicant according to Article 36.
2. This REPORT consists of a total of 5 sheets, including this cover sheet.
- ☒ This report is also accompanied by ANNEXES, i.e. sheets of the description, claims and/or drawings which have been amended and are the basis for this report and/or sheets containing rectifications made before this Authority (see Rule 70.16 and Section 607 of the Administrative Instructions under the PCT).
- These annexes consist of a total of 2 sheets.

3. This report contains indications relating to the following items:

- I ☒ Basis of the opinion
- II ☐ Priority
- III ☐ Non-establishment of opinion with regard to novelty, inventive step and industrial applicability
- IV ☐ Lack of unity of invention
- V ☒ Reasoned statement under Rule 66.2(a)(ii) with regard to novelty, inventive step or industrial applicability; citations and explanations supporting such statement
- VI ☐ Certain documents cited
- VII ☐ Certain defects in the international application
- VIII ☐ Certain observations on the international application

Date of submission of the demand 26.08.2003	Date of completion of this report 29.04.2004
Name and mailing address of the International preliminary examining authority:  European Patent Office - P.B. 5818 Patentlaan 2 NL-2280 HV Rijswijk - Pays Bas Tel. +31 70 340 - 2040 Tx: 31 651 epo nl Fax: +31 70 340 - 3016	Authorized Officer Aran, D Telephone No. +31 70 340-2331 

INTERNATIONAL PRELIMINARY EXAMINATION REPORT

International application No. PCT/GB 03/00276

I. Basis of the report

1. With regard to the **elements** of the international application (*Replacement sheets which have been furnished to the receiving Office in response to an invitation under Article 14 are referred to in this report as "originally filed" and are not annexed to this report since they do not contain amendments (Rules 70.16 and 70.17):*

Description, Pages

1-22 as originally filed

Claims, Numbers

1-13 received on 31.01.2004 with letter of 29.01.2004

2. With regard to the **language**, all the elements marked above were available or furnished to this Authority in the language in which the international application was filed, unless otherwise indicated under this item.

These elements were available or furnished to this Authority in the following language: , which is:

- ☐ the language of a translation furnished for the purposes of the international search (under Rule 23.1(b)).
 - ☐ the language of publication of the international application (under Rule 48.3(b)).
 - ☐ the language of a translation furnished for the purposes of international preliminary examination (under Rule 55.2 and/or 55.3).
3. With regard to any **nucleotide and/or amino acid sequence** disclosed in the international application, the international preliminary examination was carried out on the basis of the sequence listing:
 - ☐ contained in the international application in written form.
 - ☐ filed together with the international application in computer readable form.
 - ☐ furnished subsequently to this Authority in written form.
 - ☐ furnished subsequently to this Authority in computer readable form.
 - ☐ The statement that the subsequently furnished written sequence listing does not go beyond the disclosure in the international application as filed has been furnished.
 - ☐ The statement that the information recorded in computer readable form is identical to the written sequence listing has been furnished.
 4. The amendments have resulted in the cancellation of:
 - ☐ the description, pages:
 - ☐ the claims, Nos.:
 - ☐ the drawings, sheets:
 5. ☒ This report has been established as if (some of) the amendments had not been made, since they have been considered to go beyond the disclosure as filed (Rule 70.2(c)).

(Any replacement sheet containing such amendments must be referred to under item 1 and annexed to this report.)

see separate sheet

6. Additional observations, if necessary:

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**INTERNATIONAL PRELIMINARY
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see separate sheet

**V. Reasoned statement under Article 35(2) with regard to novelty, inventive step or industrial applicability;
citations and explanations supporting such statement**

1. Statement

Novelty (N)	Yes: Claims	1-13
	No: Claims	
Inventive step (IS)	Yes: Claims	1-13
	No: Claims	
Industrial applicability (IA)	Yes: Claims	1-13
	No: Claims	

2. Citations and explanations

see separate sheet

**INTERNATIONAL PRELIMINARY
EXAMINATION REPORT - SEPARATE SHEET**

International application No. PCT/GB03/00276

1. Re Item I

Basis of the report

5. The report has been established as if (some of) the amendments had not been made, since they have been considered to go beyond the disclosure as filed (Rule 70.2(c) PCT):

The amendments filed with the letter dated 29/01/2004 introduce subject-matter which extends beyond the content of the application as filed, contrary to Article 34(2)(b) PCT. The amendments concerned are the following:

Nowhere in the disclosure could be found that "a periphery of each compartment is cut". In particular, the passage in description, p. 5, l. 21-32, does not add anything concerning the cut trajectory.

However, there is no added subject matter if the process is limited to perforation, because it is supported by the description, p. 5, l. 5-7.

Therefore, the text of claims has been taken into account as if the wording "cutting or" is not present in claim 1 resp. 6, limiting thus the application to "perforating".

2. Re Item V

Reasoned statement under Article 35(2) with regard to novelty, inventive step or industrial applicability; citations and explanations supporting such statement

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**INTERNATIONAL PRELIMINARY
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International application No. PCT/GB03/00276

1. Reference is made to the following document:

D1: EP-A-0 699 586 (NAT STARCH CHEM INVEST) 6 March 1996 (1996-03-06)

2. Claims 1 resp. 6

A process for separating a water-soluble or water-dispersible film or stack of films (claim 1) resp. a process for producing a water-soluble or water-dispersible container containing a composition (claim 6) is described in document D1.

At the time of filing the present application, no available prior art document discloses the features of claim "a periphery of each compartment is perforated" resp. "perforating the combined web along a periphery of at least one container".

As a result, the waste produced when separating the compartments from the web can be significantly reduced by allowing the gap between the adjacent compartments to be reduced or possibly even eliminated .

Claims 2-5 resp. 7-13

Claims 2-5 resp. 7-13 concern modifications of the inventive concept expressed in claim 1 resp. 6 and should meet the criteria set forth in Article 33 (1) PCT with respect to the available prior art.

CLAIMS

1. A process for cutting or perforating a water-soluble or water-dispersible film or stack of films in the form of a web comprising a plurality of compartments by which each compartment is cut or perforated by applying a laser beam to the film or stack of films.
2. A process according to claim 1 wherein the water-soluble film is based upon PVOH.
3. A process according to claim 1 or 2 wherein the film is in the form of a laminate.
4. A process according to any one of claims 1 to 3 wherein the film is perforated by the laser beam.
5. A process according to any one of the preceding claims wherein the film has a thickness of from 20 to 150 μm and the stack of films has a thickness of from 40 to 500 μm .
6. A process for producing a water-soluble or water-dispersible container containing a composition which comprises:
 - a. producing a base web water-soluble or water-dispersible film containing a plurality of pockets;
 - b. filling each pocket with a composition;
 - c. sealing the pockets with a top web water-soluble or water-dispersible film to produce closed containers; and

- d. separating at least one container from the plurality of containers by cutting or perforating the combined web with a laser beam.
- 5 7. A process according to claim 6 wherein the composition is a liquid composition.
8. A process according to any one of the preceding claims wherein the composition is a fabric care, surface
10 care or dishwashing composition.
9. A process according to claim 8 wherein the composition is a dishwashing, water-softening, laundry or detergent composition or a rinse-aid.
- 15 10. A process according to claim 8 wherein the composition is a disinfectant, antibacterial or antiseptic composition, or a refill composition for a trigger-type spray.
- 20 11. A process according to any one of claims 1 to 6 wherein the composition is a hazardous composition which is potentially toxic or damaging or detrimental to health or the environment.
- 25 12. A process according to any one of claims 1 to 6 wherein the composition is a pesticidal composition.
13. A process according to any one of claims 1 to 6
30 wherein the composition is a pharmaceutical or nutraceutical composition.

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14. Use of a laser beam to continuously cut or perforate a PVOH film.